



The Wallingford Community Day Care Center, Inc.

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5426

Legislative Testimony
State of Connecticut General Assembly
January Session 2009

Proposed Bill No. 5426

An Act Concerning Child Care Subsidies for the Unemployed Under the Care 4 Kids Program

To: Human Services Committee

From: Kathleen M. Queen, Executive Director; Liaison, State Funded Child Care Directors Forum; Early Childhood Alliance, Member

Date: 05 February 2009

In difficult economic times, it is essential that we hold Connecticut's children harmless. HB 5426 will assist families already traumatized by the loss of employment, by allowing their children to continue with consistent, stable, quality child care and education for the time necessary for their parents to secure another job. By correlating the Care 4 Kids eligibility for lower income families to the federally increased time for unemployment benefits, we help reduce the extreme stress on the family structure and allow time for the parent to secure alternative employment.

Reimbursement rates for Care 4 Kids have not been adjusted since 2001, and are based on a percentile of the market rate in 2001. Providers are dependent on those meager rates to keep programs open and to offer high quality early childhood programming. Eliminating service for the unemployed parents 30 days following the month of dismissal merely complicates this already grossly underfunded system and creates the potential for the loss of many more jobs as child care staff are laid off or programs closed. The new economic stimulus plan proposed at the federal level is most likely to include funding under the Child Care and Development Block Grant to defray any additional costs to the Care 4 Kids line item.

We urge the Human Services Committee to approve HB 5426. Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted:

